



Seeking the God of Ecstasy: A Spiritual Journey of Sexual Awakening

Melina Costello

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In this modern vision quest, Melina Costello gives a gripping firsthand account of the ecstatic flights and dark impulses that accompany a woman's inner journey of self-awakening. Progressing through dreamscape encounters with Dionysus, the Greek god of ecstasy, Costello boldly addresses sexual repressions and spiritual assumptions as she seeks to liberate her inner and secular life. Half-mortal and half-god, Dionysus personifies humanity's instinctual sense of unity with the natural world. To receive the ecstatic light of divine truth which is granted to those who enter his realm, she must also embrace the deity's shadowy impulses of erotic desire. Her seduction by Dionysus compels her to re-imagine sexual love as a creative participation in the soul's boundless fertility, not as a demoralization of spiritual values.

"Melina Costello has entered the winepress and produced from her own alchemy of soul a rare wine to savor. Through bridging the sacred and commonplace, she candidly and intimately fleshes out her dramatic initiation into the paradoxical realm of 'ek-stasis'--the fall into the breathable dance of opposites that is the fragmenting fate of soul--which merges us with the divine madness that is Dionysus. The archetypes, as Melina makes clear, are the openers of mysterious doors, leading to terror, wonder, wisdom and transformation. Creative dialogue with them requires a shamanic kind of inner strength, shrewdness, imaginal power and moral courage. When approached with the author's brand of creative fire, reverence and vulnerability, this can be a perilous yet exuberant dance at the rim of the Abyss: too much or too little control and we risk being overwhelmed. Melina discerningly avoids either extreme. She both gives herself fully to a raw merging with the rending joy of Dionysus and at the same time wisely distances herself in order to reflect. This is a god we cannot, dare not face till we have ourselves become many faces, many masks, all of them forged through successive deaths and rebirths that render us as fluid as nature's elements and changing forms. Melina makes all this viscerally real and alive in this uniquely exuberant, timely and deeply personal work."

--Maureen B. Roberts, Ph.D, Soul-centered Psychiatric and Shamanic Therapist, Co-founder: Mental Health ReEducation and Human Rights Network Australia, Inc.

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Jamie Hernandez:

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